THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840].

"They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever" (PSALM 125: 1).

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THE DOCTRINE OF REPENTANCE.

(*Concluded from page 69.*)

When the repentant sinner has been baptized and forgiven, he is in a condition to receive the Holy Ghost and all the gifts and graces which come from Him, as Peter says: "Repent and be baptized * * * and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2: 38). The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in man, which begins from the moment he is cleansed and purified, is the source of a new spiritual life, which increases in strength until he is transformed into the image of Christ; until he is one with the Father and the Son in his aims and plans, his desires and yearnings, his thoughts and sentiments, his views and opinions. The Spirit is, in the language of Brigham Young (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 6, page 95), "God's Messenger that diffuses His influence through all the works of the Almighty." It is the office of the Spirit to "enlighten the eyes of the understanding" (Eph. 1: 18), that we may know the things which God has revealed (I. Cor. 2: 12), or "the things of the Spirit of God." It is His office to give revelations, for "No man can receive the Holy Ghost without receiving revelations" (Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, Vol. 6, page 58). It is His office to impart gifts of healing, of prophecy, and all other necessary gifts for the building up of the believer in the faith, and the growth of the Church. It is His special office to be a witness in the heart of man and testify to the truth. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8: 16, 17). He gives us the assurance that our sins are blotted out, and enables us to turn to God with a good conscience.

True repentance manifests itself in a desire to confess sins and

to make restitution for wrongs committed. This is in full accord with the teachings of the Scriptures: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Proverbs 28: 13). "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (I. John 1: 8, 9). "And it came to pass that Alma went and judged those that had been taken in iniquity, according to the word of the Lord. And whosoever repented of their sins and did confess them, them he did number among the people of the church; and those that would not confess their sins and repent of their iniquity, the same were not numbered among the people of the church, and their names were blotted out" (Mosiah 26: 34-36).

So prominent a part does confession occupy as a manifestation of the spiritual life which begins with repentance, that the Roman Catholic church considers it essential to salvation. Confession, that church teaches, is an ordinance for the remission of sins committed after baptism. It must be auricular and include all "mortal" sins. The priest who hears the confession has the authority to grant absolution on condition that the penance prescribed is performed and satisfaction rendered. The priest, Rome declares, has the power to remit and retain sins; he carries the keys of heaven and hell, and opens and closes at will; hence no sin committed after baptism can, according to this view, be remitted unless it is confessed to a priest.

But this is contrary to the Scriptures. The Apostle James says: "Confess your faults one to another [not to the priest] and pray for one another" (James 5: 16); and David states his experience thus: "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. * * * I acknowledged my sin unto thee [not the priest], and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest me the iniquity of my sin" (Ps. 32: 3-5). In the Book of Mormon we read: "Many were brought before the altar of God, to call on his name, and confess their sins before him" (Alma 17: 4). Thus we see that confession is, in the first place, a matter between the repentant sinner and his God. There are cases in which confession of one man, or woman, to another is proper and even necessary; but confession to a priest, because he is a priest, is nowhere enjoined. That is a mere human contrivance, and, as such, void and in vain. Brigham Young well observes:

"I do not want to know anything about the sins of this people, at least no more than I am obliged to. If persons lose confidence in themselves, it takes away the strength, faith and confidence that others have in them; it leaves a space that we call weakness. If you have committed a sin that no other person on the earth knows of, and which harms no other one, you have done a wrong and sinned against your God, but keep that within your own

bosom, and seek to God and confess there, and get pardon for your sin.

"If children have sinned against their parents, or husbands against their wives, or wives against their husbands, let them confess their faults one to another and forgive each other, and there let the confession stop; and then let them ask pardon from their God. Confess your sins to whoever you have sinned against, and let it stop there. If you have committed a sin against the community, confess to them. If you have sinned in your family, confess there. Confess your sins, iniquities and follies, where that confession belongs, and learn to classify your actions" (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, page 79).

Confession without restitution, when possible, is of no avail. On this subject we may again quote Brigham Young: "I have had many a one come to me—honest men to all appearance—men that you would almost have sworn were as holy as an angel, and confess that they had stolen nails from me, or a wagon, etc. But they have not yet become honest enough to bring the stolen articles back. In what condition are they, after such a confession, without making restitution, compensation, or some kind of satisfaction? Just as they were before" (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 6, page 71). Restitution, we may perhaps say, is to confession what ripe fruit, in due season, is to a healthy, vigorous tree.

The question whether repentance is possible after death may be briefly considered here. According to the Church of Rome all unbaptized adults, all schismatics, all heretics, and all who die in their sins, impenitent, without priestly absolution, go to the place of eternal torment, while those who die in full fellowship in the church, but without being perfected in holiness, pass into purgatory. Here they may remain for an hour, a day, a number of years, or ages, until they are purified and fit to enter heaven. To that extent the Roman Catholics believe in the possibility of repentance, or salvation, after death. The Protestants generally hold that the probation of every soul ends with this life, and that the fate of each is settled at death. "As the tree falls," they say, "so it lies." A great gulf separates, they believe, the rich man from Lazarus forever. Neither of these doctrines is scriptural.

In the Old Testament the doctrine of salvation after death is at least adumbrated in the beautiful songs in which the inspired poets give thanks to God, because "His mercy endureth for ever" (Psalm 106: 1; 107: 1; 118 and 136). If His mercy is everlasting, it does not end at the grave. It cannot be said to endure for ever, if it is operative only during the exceedingly brief moment human life lasts this side of the veil. A Father's mercy, which is both infinite and everlasting, must have some means of reaching out after, and saving, the erring children on the other side as well as here.

In the New Testament this comforting and glorious truth stands

forth in greater clearness. Our Lord declares expressly that, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw *all men* unto me" (John 12: 32). Accordingly, the Apostle John, on Patmos, saw the redeemed multitude as an innumerable host in which all nations, kindreds, peoples and tongues were represented (Rev. 5: 9; 7: 9). Peter declares that Christ "preached unto the spirits in prison"; and that the gospel was "preached also to them that are dead" (I. Peter 3: 19; 4: 6). He had just stated that both quick and dead shall give an account to God for their lives, and the question naturally was suggested, "By what law will the dead be judged, who never heard the gospel?" This question he answers by the statement that the gospel was preached also to the dead, that they may be judged "according to men in the flesh"; that is, as those are judged who have heard the gospel in this life; and live "according to God," which expression can mean nothing less than that through the preaching of the gospel they may become partakers of life eternal in the presence of God. Paul seems to have the same truth in view when he directs the Corinthians to deliver a certain transgressor to Satan "for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (I. Cor. 5: 5), and perhaps also when he says that the followers of our Lord have been admitted not only to the innumerable company of angels and the general assembly and church of the firstborn, but also "to the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. 12: 22, 23). If the spirits of just men are made perfect, it cannot be maintained that the spirit, as soon as it leaves the earthly tabernacle, is outside the operations of the Holy Spirit for redemption and salvation.

But in this last dispensation the doctrine of salvation for the dead has been clearly, if not yet fully, revealed. The Prophet Joseph tells us (Doc. and Cov. 128: 5) that baptism for the dead is an ordinance "ordained and prepared before the foundation of the world, for the salvation of the dead who should die without a knowledge of the gospel." He also tells us that "There is never a time when the spirit is too old to approach God. All are within the reach of pardoning mercy, who have not committed the unpardonable sin, which hath no forgiveness, neither in this world, nor the world to come. There is a way to release the spirits of the dead; that is, by the power and authority of the Priesthood—by binding and loosing on earth. This doctrine appears glorious, inasmuch as it exhibits the greatness of divine compassion and benevolence in the extent of the plan of human salvation" (*History of the Church*, Vol. 4, page 425).

But although this great truth has now been revealed anew, no one should put off repentance until after death. As Dr. James E. Talmage well says: "We know not on what terms repentance will be obtainable in the hereafter, but it is unreasonable to suppose that the soul who has wilfully rejected the opportunity of

repentance in this life will find it easy to repent there. To procrastinate the day of repentance is to deliberately place ourselves in the power of the adversary" (*Articles of Faith*, page 119).

The change wrought in man through repentance, baptism, forgiveness of sins, and the reception of the Holy Ghost is sometimes called regeneration. Man in his natural state is spiritually dead. As one physically dead is insensible to all the objects that impress the living, so man before he has experienced that change is insensible to things which pertain to God and salvation. He may be physically perfect and comprehend readily the truths within the reach of human reason, or our moral and social obligations, and yet he is dead as to "the things of God," until he is regenerated, or "born again." In this regeneration a new life is imparted. He becomes a new creature. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"; "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Such is the nature and the effects of the change of which repentance is the beginning. It is a "new birth," by which man sees and enters the kingdom of heaven, just as by the natural birth he opens his eyes upon, and obtains an entrance into, the physical world.

J. M. S.

NEW LIGHT AND NEW THOUGHT.

In my early school days, when I was about six years of age, we had a Scripture examination. The examiner asked us a series of questions concerning the scriptural subjects which our teacher had taught us. As it happened, I was placed first in the class for answering the questions correctly, and also had the choice of any of the prizes which the teacher had provided. These prizes included a watch and chain (price 1d.), a fancy dog whip (price 6½d.), etc. I chose the watch and chain. Looking back over a space of seventeen years it makes me smile to think that I should choose the lowest prize of the lot and stand the first in scriptural knowledge. But such are people's minds.

The scriptural knowledge which I was taught then amounted to almost nothing, and yet it has helped me to see the truth that is to be found in the gospel that is being preached by the elders and saints of the Church of Jesus Christ. I was taught many things then that to me now are myths. There are many more in the Church who have gone through the same experience, and who are now grown up and can see that the subjects taught them in their childhood days, when compared to the truth, fall into insignificance. This gospel of the latter days tends toward making us physically and morally fit for this world, and helps us to choose those things which will benefit both mind and body. When we see the people around us who were our school mates running in the same religious groove as they were when at school, it makes us

want to show them what light and knowledge we have, and what elevating and uplifting thoughts the gospel possesses. Let us thank God for leading us to see the difference between right and wrong, and for the blessings that are showered upon us for believing and keeping His commandments. Let us persevere with our friends who do not belong to our faith, and show them the great difference between the gospel and the many different religions of the world. Let us be like the blind man who was healed by the Savior, and who went throughout the country telling of the blessings he had received. Which of us can sit at home rejoicing in the liberty which God has bestowed upon us, while his next door neighbor and his work mates are bound by the foolish traditions of their fathers? Not one of us, I hope.

Let us, then, become like Christ by going out and seeking the lost sheep and bringing them into the fold. In the Doctrine and Covenants (Sec. 88: 81), we read: "Behold, I send you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor." This is, surely, a command. There are millions who have not yet heard this gospel. Do not let us be like the butler who had his dream interpreted. Joseph said: "But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house" (Gen. 40: 14). But the butler enjoyed the freedom he had gained, and forgot about Joseph until two years after. We have no time to spare like the butler. Now is the time. "Be instant in season and out of season." The following lines are certainly true:

"If you cannot cross the ocean,
And the heathen lands explore,
You can find the heathen nearer;
You can find him at your door."

REG. A. HANSON.

DOUBTING THOMAS.

How many of us profit by the lesson conveyed in the story of the doubts of Thomas? When told by the other disciples that they had seen the risen Lord, he said: "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." Eight days later the disciples were again gathered together, Thomas being among the number, when suddenly the Savior stood in their midst. His salutation, "Peace be unto you," was just the Master's loving greeting. Then, perhaps, with reproach in his voice, he turned to His doubting disciple and told him, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy

hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." Then came the disciple's profession of faith, "My Lord and my God." He loved his Lord, but the report of the resurrection glory—that Christ had appeared—after they had laid the dear, dead body in the tomb, was too much for him to credit without personal proof. Therefore, the Savior answered him thus: "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

And so it is with those who profess faith in Christ and yet will not follow the example which our Lord and Savior laid down. Did He not say, when here among men, "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Let us kneel down in our chambers and ask the Lord to bless us, that our faith may grow and increase with each passing day; that we may believe and be able to say with the Prophet Job of old: "Even though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." And when temptations come before us, and when the scoffs and scorn of the world are hurled against us, may we remember Him who suffered humiliation and death on the cross, that we may have eternal life. Let us not wait for signs and visions to prove to us the divinity of Christ's mission on earth, but let our faith become so great that we will obey the commandments of our heavenly Father, and then will His Spirit testify with ours that we have entered on that path which leadeth back into His presence. May we then trust Him as little children, with unwavering faith, being able to say whatever comes:

"Thy will, not mine, O Lord,
However hard it be;
Lead me by thine own hand,
Choose out my path for me."

Middlesborough. ANNIE PENNOCK.

THINK not, my young friends, that you can spend the prime and vigor of your days in the vanities and pleasures of life, and in your more advanced years store your minds with wisdom and knowledge; but let your youthful energies now be devoted to the acquisition of literary and scientific knowledge, that when you arrive to manly strength, dignity and wisdom, you may call into immediate requisition the fruits of your youthful labors and toil.—ORSON HYDE.

SCARCELY can we fix our eyes upon a single passage in this wonderful book [the Bible] which has not afforded comfort or instruction to thousands, and been met with tears of penitential sorrow or grateful joy drawn from eyes that will weep no more.—PAYSON.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

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EDITORIAL.

THE MESSAGE OF THE CHURCH.

THE Scriptures teach us that God has not at any time left Himself without witness to the nations of the earth (Acts 14: 17); "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. 1: 20). That is, man, by contemplating the universe of which he is a part, the order which prevails everywhere, in the minutest particles, as in the vast orbs scattered through space, has an irrefutable testimony of the power and the wisdom of the Creator; and furthermore, by studying the constitution of his own nature he cannot but draw inferences as to his divine origin, and receive some knowledge concerning his duties and obligations as being capable of discerning between right and wrong, truth and error, good and evil.

The children of men are not dependent solely upon nature for a knowledge of truth. They have also tradition. The teachings handed down from Noah through the various divisions of the human family were never lost entirely. As the children of men branched out from the original centers of population, many of them necessarily became so strenuously occupied in hunting for food and wresting from the soil a precarious living that they neglected their religious observances. Abraham taught his children the commandments of God, as the earlier patriarchs had done; but this important duty was not always attended to by the heads of families when men emigrated in various directions, and as a consequence, the knowledge concerning God, as at first imparted through revelation, became more and more dim among the scattered nations and tribes, as time passed by, just as many of the arts of the original civilization were lost through neglect, or lack of opportunity to cultivate them. But all knowledge of God and moral duties was not lost by any nation. Some truth always remained with all men. God's testimony in nature and in conscience no one can escape, no matter where he goes. Nor can he place himself entirely outside the reach of the truth that lives in tradition. The traditions may have come down in a form so mutilated and perverted as to retain very little of the original beauty; but some truth from this pure source nevertheless comes with them.

This great fact becomes apparent when we study the old world religions with an unbiased mind. It was general among Christians

at one time to consider the religions of pagans as nothing but error of the grossest kind, directly traceable to the father of falsehoods and the enemy of man, and to believe that all heathens were doomed to eternal damnation. But this is itself an error, due to ignorance. Take, for instance, the Buddhist religion which, at one time almost one-fourth of the human race professed. Among the mass of errors it presents, it teaches that spiritual progress is impossible without a life of purity and compassion. It teaches that truth enters the mind of him who fearlessly searches for it and is free from prejudices and sensual passion. Its ideal is the human brotherhood—universal love and sympathy with all mankind and all the creatures of God. In the same way Hindnism teaches that there is a merciful God, the creator of the heavens and the earth; that man is a spiritual being with a divine soul, who will reach freedom from sin and misery by living a pure life. God, the Hindus say, is merciful, but purity is the condition on which mercy may be obtained, for God appears only to the pure. God, they teach, "reveals himself to the pure heart, and the pure and stainless man sees God, yea, even in this life, and then, and then only, all the crookedness of the heart is made straight." Confucianism, which has been made the state religion of China, although sometimes referred to as a philosophy and not a religion, inculcates wisdom, righteousness, and benevolence. It gives rules for the proper conduct in almost all relations between man and man, living and dead. The ancient Greeks had a mythology, of which the key to a correct understanding is probably lost; but it made them a religious people, and developed the very best qualities in their men and women. The Egyptians, as far back as history goes, had a deep impression of the doctrine of the immortality of man and of future rewards and punishments, and their religion taught them the virtue of truth, chastity, benevolence, etc. It was the same with the ancient Romans and Scandinavians. God has never left Himself without a testimony to His children. And for that reason we believe in the great truth stated by Brigham Young (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 3, page 93):

"The very heathen we were talking about; if they have a law, no matter who made it, and do the best they know how, they will have a glory which is beyond your imagination, by any description I might give; you cannot conceive of the least portion of the glory of God prepared for His beings, the workmanship of His hands; for these people who are seated before me, who are the sons and daughters, legitimately so, of our Father in heaven, they all sprung from Him; it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive what He has prepared for them."

And thus the covenant made between the Father and the Son will be fulfilled: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Psalm 2: 8).

The question might then be asked, If there is enough light in nature and tradition to guide the honest wanderer through life to eternal glory, why did the Lord give special revelations to the world through the prophets, apostles, and teachers of old, and through His inspired servants of our own day and dispensation?

Modern revelation is by no means silent on this point. It teaches us that there are degrees of glory, even as some stars are more brilliant than others, and that the highest can only be reached through the observance of the laws pertaining to that state (Doc. and Cov. 76: 50-113). That is the reason why special and direct revelation is necessary. We again quote Brigham Young:

"We are created, we are born for the express purpose of growing up from the low estate of manhood, to become gods like unto our Father in heaven. That is the truth about it, just as it is. The Lord has organized mankind for the express purpose of increasing in that intelligence and truth, which is with God, until he is capable of creating worlds on worlds, and becoming gods, even the sons of God.

"How many will become thus privileged? Those who honor the Father and the Son; those who receive the Holy Ghost, and magnify their calling, and are found pure and holy; they shall be crowned in the presence of the Father and the Son. Who else? Not anybody. What becomes of all the rest? Are you going to cast them down, and sink them to the bottom of the bottomless pit, to be angels to the devil? Who are his angels? No man nor woman, unless they receive the gospel of salvation, and then deny it, and altogether turn away from it, sacrificing to themselves the Son of God afresh. They are the only ones who will suffer the wrath of God to all eternity."

From the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith we know that all men will have an equal chance to accept the revealed truth and become heirs of the celestial glory. He says:

"All who have died without a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom of God; also all that shall die henceforth without a knowledge of it, who would have received it with all their hearts, shall be heirs of that kingdom, for I, the Lord, will judge all men according to their works, according to the desire of their hearts.

"And I also beheld that all children who die before they arrive at the years of accountability, are saved in the celestial kingdom of heaven" (Roberts, *History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 380).

And thus we understand that God, in His mercy and love, has revealed great and glorious truths which man could not have learned from any other source, in order that all, both living and dead, should have an opportunity to enter celestial glory. That is why the gospel has been given to the children of men. That is

why the Church has been established on earth, and commissioned to proclaim a message of salvation which embraces both dead and living. God's all-merciful purpose is to save all who can be saved and place them where they can enjoy the fullest measure of happiness of which they are capable. But whether the exaltation is telestial, terrestrial, or celestial, it is attained through the ministration of those who attain to celestial glory. For so the Revelation tells us (Doc. and Cov. 76: 86, 87): "These [those in telestial glory] are they who receive not of his fulness in the eternal world, but of the Holy Spirit through the ministration of the terrestrial; and the terrestrial through the ministration of the celestial." From which it is clear that all salvation, all exaltation, all happiness in the hereafter comes to the human family through those who have received the gospel and by faithfulness attained celestial glory.

Some people have the impression that "Mormonism" is the dream of narrow-minded bigots. Nothing is farther from the truth. "Mormonism" is the message of God, the just and loving Father, to all His children. There is no system of theology, no philosophy, as comprehensive as the gospel of Jesus Christ.

J. M. S.

PRE-EXISTENCE.

THE members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believe in the doctrine of pre-existence. This idea is not new, for many of our greatest poets reveal the fact that their minds have at various times soared upwards and backwards to a life that did not begin on this earth.

To the writer of this article the doctrine of pre-existence holds out great hopes, so far as explaining some of the problems of this complex life of ours is concerned. He was almost an atheist, and denied revelation and prophecy, but many lingering doubts were cast away, many things were explained through that doctrine. Prophecy I regarded as nothing more than a remarkable series of coincidences, but now I can understand that prophecy *must* be based upon a knowledge of the past; if not, how could men predict with certainty not only events that would come to pass, but also the actions of certain individuals, that would cause these events to happen? If it is said that the prophets of old did not have a knowledge of the past; or their knowledge of the past was not so complete as ours—for we have extensive libraries, which enable us to gather information on historical facts—I reply that the prophets of old spoke under the influence of the Spirit of God. They were instruments in His hands for making known to His children the things that He desired them to know. That God had a knowledge of the past—a past that goes far back to a time when the earth was not in existence—the following will suffice to prove:

"When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel" (Dent. 38: 2).

This certainly speaks of a very early period, when God separated the sons of Adam, and it is difficult to conceive how God could have had the number of the children of Israel in view, unless He had known the number of a spiritual Israel, of which the temporal was to be a counterpart. Moreover, God said to Jeremiah: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jer. 1: 5). Does not this convey to the mind that God, knowing the spiritual individuality of Jeremiah before he was born, recognized in him a worthy recipient of earthly honors? The sacred writings, both old and new, testify to the truth of this doctrine. There is an abundance of proof that we lived in another sphere, that "the spirit will go back to God who gave it"; and yet, in the face of it all the question can still be asked, Why, if this is true, do we forget all the knowledge we gained in our pre-existent state?

In the absence of explanatory facts, conjecture is permissible, and, surely, we can venture a solution to this difficult problem. God is a rational Being, who works on natural principles; therefore, our forgetting can only come about in a natural way. Let us bear in mind that all the knowledge we gain in this life is by means of vibrations passing along sense-nerves, which in turn carry impressions to the mind; that all movement is by means of vibrations; that all knowledge gained here is only in a relative degree, and if ever we do become aware of things that are outside the range of the five senses, the mind must be assisted by complexly constructed instruments in order to become aware that such things exist, as in wireless telegraphy. Again, "Truth is a knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come, and all truth is independent in the sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also, otherwise there is no existence" (Doc. and Cov. 93: 24-30). Therefore, this earth of ours is different from other planets. Facts here are independent and, in a way, different from facts elsewhere; let us keep these facts in mind while we view the spirit in the spirit world.

This spirit is an intelligent being, living with the "Father of spirits," responding to the surroundings environments, and having its own free agency, to obey, or disobey, the laws governing the sphere on which it dwells, for the apostles asked Christ, "Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind." Then, having kept its first estate, and reached the critical stage when it was necessary that it should come to earth and increase its store of knowledge, it is thrown into entirely new surroundings. This is accomplished by the spirit taking upon itself a body of flesh and

bones. Now the physical make-up of man is of the earth earthy, and it is made to respond to the conditions and laws existing here, and here only, and it is provided with five senses or means of communication from the outer world to the inner being within, that being that is conscious of its own existence and of other existences, that being which has will power and memory, that which reasons and reflects, and has power to do things.

The body, then, may be likened to a perfect machine, which in and of itself has no intelligence, nor power to move or act. Take as an illustration a locomotive all charged with steam. It is quite ready to draw the coaches swiftly on the rails, yet it is useless until the engineer, the life or the spirit of it, enters the cab and pulls the throttle which causes it to move.

The result of this line of reasoning is that we reach the inevitable conclusion that when the spiritual being leaves that sphere whence it came, it is suddenly enclosed, as it were, in a dark "cell," with only five unused inlets (the five senses) to carry impressions from this new outer world to the intelligent being within, and as the scope of vibrations is very limited, and those only caused by the coarser earthly objects, the being within has not the means, or the medium at its command, by which it can make known to its fellowman the knowledge that it gained in the other sphere, because the conditions there are totally different to the conditions here. Thus do we say that we forget; but perhaps it would be nearer the mark to say that we have not the rightly toned instruments that will enable us to transmit to one another a knowledge of our former existence. But we can console ourselves with the promise that all the intelligence that we attain to in this life will rise with us at the resurrection, and added to that will be the knowledge that we gained in our pre-existent state.

Halifax. J. DOYLE.

JOSEPH SMITH, SENT OF GOD.

"WAS Joseph Smith sent of God?" Some people might say that I am not qualified to speak in defense of, or vindicate, the character of a man whom I have never met. But no one would condemn me for attempting to defend the character of Jesus Christ, or argue for the existence of a Supreme Being, although I have never met either of them in the flesh, or anyone who had. I never have seen my own heart; yet who would object to me for believing I had one? So I think I should be permitted to speak in defense of a man I believe to have been sent of God, and to have been martyred some seventy years ago—a man who, "though dead, yet speaketh."

Who was Joseph Smith? Joseph Smith is the founder of the Church, or the instrument in the hand of God by which the Church of Jesus Christ was re-established in these latter days in its pristine power and beauty. Joseph Smith's name is more

despised by those who oppose him than any other man's and, on the other hand, his memory is cherished and his name revered more than any other man's by those who knew him and by those who have embraced his teachings, and this is simply fulfilling a prediction made concerning him to the effect that his name would go forward for good or evil.

Now, this man Joseph Smith made some of the boldest assertions that any man could make. He testified that he had seen God, the Father, and Jesus Christ, the Son. When a lad of about fourteen summers he began to be concerned about his future state, and upon enquiring about the plan of salvation he found among the different sects (too numerous to mention) a great deal of conflicting doctrine, and each church claiming to be a standard of perfection. Believing that such confusion was not of God, he decided to make his troubles a matter of definite prayer, taking James 1: 5, 6, as his guide. In response to his prayer for information as to which of the churches was right, he saw two heavenly visitors, one of whom was God, our heavenly Father, and the other Jesus Christ, who commanded him to join none of the sects, as they were all wrong. This command Joseph Smith obeyed. Now, if Joseph Smith was the impostor the world says he was; or, if he was not sent of God, then the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints cannot be right, and the quarter of a million people baptized into it are still in their sins and are no better off than the millions in the sectarian churches who are grovelling in speculation and darkness.

A perfect organization—and this Church is that—without power and authority, is no better than the multitudes of human inventions that have no resemblance to the primitive pattern; indeed, the former is the most dangerous, because it is more capable of deceiving. Other churches do not profess to have inspired apostles, prophets, evangelists, and so forth; but the Latter-day Saints profess to have all the officers of the primitive church among them, and also authority to administer in every form, ordinance, and blessing of that Church. In fact, the Latter-day Saints claim to be members of a Church organized under the direction of Jesus Christ Himself. And so, if Joseph Smith was not sent of God, then, I repeat, this Church, in all its greatness of organization, is no better off than the other sectarian churches. It behooves each individual to enquire if Joseph Smith was right or wrong.

I will present but two claims made by Joseph Smith to prove that he was sent of God, and that the Church which he established has divine sanction.

Some time after his interview with the heavenly Beings, he was visited by an angel of God whose name was Moroni. This angel was formerly an ancient prophet among a remnant of the tribe of Joseph, who lived on the American continent. The angel Moroni revealed to Joseph Smith the hiding place of the records he had kept of that ancient people some fourteen hundred years previous,

and these sacred records contained the everlasting gospel as it was taught by Jesus Christ, our Savior, to this branch of Israel. This angel gave Joseph Smith the necessary power to reveal the contents of these records to the earth, which Joseph Smith fearlessly did. Now this statement respecting the gospel being revealed by an angel agrees absolutely with the statement made by John the Revelator, who, looking down the stream of time, could see the world in spiritual darkness and an angel coming to earth with the everlasting gospel, to be preached to every nation, kindred, tongue and people (Rev. 14: 6, 7), and this angel which John saw was Moroni, which Joseph Smith declares communed with him. This will prove conclusively that Joseph Smith spoke the truth, and that the Scriptures were fulfilled. Had he testified that the gospel had been committed to him in any other way but by an angel, he would have been an impostor.

But these two great manifestations would have been without purpose if nothing further had taken place. Beautiful as was the revealed book, it was meaningless and useless without a legally authorised administrator, ordained to preach its precepts, baptize, and lay on hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. Moroni had not been commissioned to confer this gift. He had done all his calling permitted when he revealed the "stick of Ephraim." But Joseph Smith asserts that he obtained the authority to administer in all the ordinances mentioned in the New Testament. He did not buy this power, nor did he assume it, as most preachers do. He declares it was given him by the Apostles Peter, James and John, who had had it conferred upon them by Jesus Christ Himself, and these were the proper administrators of authority, conferring it by the laying on of hands. They also instructed him to preach, baptize and lay on hands as they themselves did in ancient times, when the gospel was upon the earth in its fulness. If Joseph Smith had said he had received this authority in any other way but by the laying on of the apostles' hands, we would understand at once that he was an impostor, since the power to administer in the ordinance of the gospel was given only by the imposition of hands, as the New Testament clearly shows.

I think such correctness upon matters of so great significance, and upon which thousands of so-called organisers have erred, indicates something more than human. It clearly indicates close relationship with God. You surely will agree with me that the simplicity and perfection of Joseph Smith's doctrine coincides most harmoniously with that of John's description in relation to the restoration of the gospel to mankind, and his testimony in relation to his apostleship. These are evidences that most wonderfully and beautifully harmonize each other, and seems almost irresistibly to force conviction upon the mind that Joseph Smith was sent of God; or, in other words, that he was indeed a prophet of God.

Belfast. HARRY FULTON.

A MOTHER TO HER MISSIONARY BOY.

THE following letter in rhyme was given by Mrs. Joseph K. Wright to her son, LeRoy, when he left home to labor in the European mission. It was handed to him just before the train pulled out from the Ogden station:

LeRoy, my dear son, as the time's drawing nigh,
From home, friends and sweetheart you'll soon say good-bye.
I hope you will feel you did choose the good part,
And fulfill your mission with purpose of heart.

Our God, He has called you this work to perform,
And He will support you and keep you from harm.
If you will be faithful in all that you do,
With joy, and with gladness He'll bring you safe through.

If o'er the deep waters He calls you to go,
No harm will befall you, no danger or woe;
But you will rejoice in the message you bear
To those you are sent, the glad tidings to share.

Take with you our blessings, our faith and our prayer.
Your burdens, your sorrows, your joys we all share.
God grant you may prosper wherever you roam,
And bring you in safety again to your home.

Oh, what a great blessing this mission will prove,
To strengthen your faith in our Father above!
And may the reward of the faithful be won,
Go forth to your labors, LeRoy, my dear son.

Oh, Father in heaven, wilt thou hear my prayer,
LeRoy I now dedicate to Thy sweet care.
O guide our young boy by Thy Spirit above.
Not my will, but Thy will, O Father of love.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Baptisms.—A baptismal service was held in the Latter-day Saints' Church, corner of Ellesmere Road and Lyons Road, Pitsmoor, Sheffield (Sheffield), when one soul was added to the fold of Christ. Elder Orson C. Parker officiated.

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